

ON JULY FOURTH

By Clinton Dangerfield



Rapt in old records luminous, Columbia sees each son
Rise from the victories of the past, by dauntless valor won:
There flashes Washington's true sword; there Marion leads his men;
There steadfast Hale, for that pure cause, dies fearlessly again!

So ceaselessly the ranks augment, so bright the glittering whole,
Bewildered Cleo scarce may all upon her page enroll.
Scant wonder that in that wild strife Columbia led the van
And conquered; for she held that wealth lay not in mines, but man.

Here were the glories of dead years. Knit to those memories still,
The precepts that her heroes left nobly their sons fulfill.
Spume o'er the wave, contumely fades, no slander dims our fame;
Thrice armed is he who on life's field shall bear Columbia's name!



CELEBRATING THE FOURTH A CENTURY AGO

PARADES, dinners, and the drinking of as many toasts as there were States in the Union formed the characteristic features of the early Fourth of July celebrations. There was less noise a century ago than is usually the case today, and absolutely no overindulgence in fireworks, because fireworks were so scarce that their use was practically restricted to the public gardens. These popular resorts, of which there were several in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and other large cities, were careful to announce, often weeks beforehand, the attractions prepared for the anniversary day.

An elaborate display of fireworks was always given in the famous Vauxhall Gardens in this city, and the genial proprietor, Joseph Delacroix, was occasionally more successful in his advertisements than in the satisfactory results of his entertainments. Patriotic fervor, then as now, frequently overlooked a multitude of inconveniences, but the Vauxhall fireworks in 1803 were evidently so miserably disappointing that sarcastic letters on the subject were published in the newspapers. Joseph Delacroix had stated that the day would be celebrated in his gardens "in a style superior in taste and magnificence to anything hitherto exhibited in this city. No pains nor expense has been spared on his part to evince his profound attachment to the principles of the American Revolution by contributing spectacles analogous to the event for the amusement of the public."

How well this boast was fulfilled may be inferred from the following criticism sent to one of the daily papers the next day:

"A most terrible crackling was heard by every ear, a great light was seen by every eye, and, above all, mighty puffs of brimstone and smoke were snuffed up by every nostril; this, however, was very patiently endured, because everything that had been displayed was considered as a mere prelude to the astonishing spectacle alluded to in Mr. Delacroix's monstrous advertisement. But, alas! it was soon pretty evident that all was over, and now, instead of bursts of applause, nothing was to be heard but exclamations of disappointment."

Seldom, however, were complaints publicly expressed. There was a simplicity in the celebrations and a spontaneity in the enthusiasm that was not to be repeated in later years.

In the evening every tavern and coffee house had a special Fourth of July dinner. This latter custom was universal. No hamlet was so small that it could not gather its company of patriotic diners in the village tavern, where their enthusiasm was displayed, not only in repeated protestations of loyalty to their country, but in drinking heartily to the toasts, which always corresponded in number to the States in the Union.

In 1804 there were seventeen States, and this system was continued several years longer until the accumulation of States became so numerous that it was an absolute impossibility for the diners to keep pace with them in drinking ability, and so, perhaps somewhat regretfully, the time-honored custom of a toast for a State was abandoned.

The residents of Brooklyn, 100 years ago, were not to be outdone by their friends in the greater city across the river, as, according to a newspaper account at the time, the Fourth of July, 1804, was celebrated in Brooklyn as follows:

"The military of Kings County assembled at the town of Brooklyn to celebrate the day. At sunrise a salute of seventeen guns was fired. The Uniform Corps of the Troop of Horse, Republican Rifemen, Washington Fusiliers and the Rising Sun companies formed on Brooklyn Heights at 10 o'clock and marched through Sands street, Main street, Front street, up old Ferry street, to the parade ground."

Later in the day there were dinners in the various taverns and the customary toasts.

In Boston there was also the inevitable parade, followed by services in the Old South Church. The Bostonians were intensely loyal to John Adams, and the toasts proposed in his honor were often far more eulogistic than those given for Jefferson. In one this sentiment was expressed:

"John Adams—too wise for office, too just for toleration. Yet be it remembered that the ostracism of Greece never tarnished the immortality of Aristides."

The Rev. Jedediah Morse, father of Samuel F. B. Morse, the inventor of the telegraph, was then a minister in Charlestown, and he had a prominent part in the services. The simplicity of these early celebrations is depicted in the following extract from a Boston paper in concluding a description of the events in Charlestown in 1804:

"In the evening a large number of ladies and gentlemen assembled at the hall, where they were served with tea, coffee and fruit. The charms of wit and beauty adorned every countenance with a smile and diffused throughout the whole company a cheerfulness and modest gaiety."

An account of the celebration at Potts Grove, Montgomery County, Pa., is interesting not only for the picture of rural enjoyment, but as a sample of the journalistic writing commonly seen in the early newspapers:

"Two field pieces, cheerfully served, sent abroad in the forenoon the lofty report of both fun and frolic by sixteen well-timed and successive discharges. Joy beamed on every brow; the green valleys and distant hills participated in the gladness of the day by reverberating the magnificent and far-sent sounds of liberty and independence."

Mention is then made of the dinner, with its attendant speeches, and, in concluding, the writer adds:

"The retired sun had just by this time let in the gloomy shade of night, upon which the company betook themselves to the tavern of James Kinkead, where they enjoyed themselves with the sprightly dance and feasted to a late hour upon song, sentiment and rosy wine."

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MEN OF BUSINESS RECOGNIZE ADVANTAGES OF ACETYLENE.

Famous Summer Hotel, the Grand Union of Saratoga, Has Installed This Best of All Artificial Lights—Means Increased Comfort and Health.

Saratoga, June 27.—The very name, "Saratoga," brings to every mind health-giving springs, unsurpassed hotels and beautiful drives. It has been for many years the Mecca for all who admire nature, enjoy good living, and are searching for health, or are simply taking a vacation.

The Grand Union, the largest summer hotel in the United States, set among green trees with its long wings enclosing a court with fountains and flowers, grass and trees, music and light, is throughout the season thronged with guests. With the progressive spirit always shown by its management, the Grand Union has again added to its attractiveness by introducing acetylene gas to make still more brilliant the evening hours. The genial proprietors believe in furnishing their guests with the best of everything, and now, after investigating and finding that Artificial Sunlight can be had, they have installed a complete acetylene gas plant to produce it, and have connected upwards of six thousand Acetylene burners in and about the plant.

Like many discoveries of recent years, which are coming into popular favor, acetylene, one of the most recent, is very simply produced. It is adapted for use wherever artificial light is needed and the necessary apparatus can be understood and operated by any one.

The generator in which Acetylene is produced by the automatic contact of carbide and water might be termed a gas plant, as it performs all of the functions of a city gas plant. The acetylene generator can be purchased for a few dollars and in any size, from one adapted to furnish acetylene to ten or a dozen burners for a cottage, up to the large but still simple machine for six thousand burners in the Grand Union.

Outside of large cities the use of Acetylene is quite common. The owner of the country home now demands running water, gas and other conveniences which a few years ago were considered as luxuries, and acetylene gas has met his requirements, and gives him a better and cheaper light than is ordinarily furnished in cities.

It is well known that rooms lighted with Acetylene are more comfortable, because cooler, and more healthful because the air is not vitiated.

When James Gordon Bennett the elder was editor of the Herald, Robert Bonner, publisher of the New York Ledger, was struggling to build up its circulation, and decided to try a little advertising. He wrote an announcement consisting of eight words: "Read Mrs. Southworth's New Story in the Ledger," and sent it to the Herald marked for "one line." Mr. Bonner's handwriting was so bad that the words were read in the Herald office as "one page." Accordingly the line was set up and repeated so as to occupy one entire page. Mr. Bonner was thunderstruck the next morning. He had not to his name money enough in the bank to pay the bill. He rushed excitedly over to the Herald office, but was too late to do any good.

In a short time the results of the page announcement began to be felt. Orders for the Ledger poured in until the entire edition was exhausted and another one was printed. The success of the Ledger was then established. Ever after that time Mr. Bonner was an ardent believer in advertising and a liberal purchaser of space.

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